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# The Trade Union Unity League

(American Section of the R. I. L. U.)

*Its Program, Structure,  
Methods and History*



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# **THE TRADE UNION UNITY LEAGUE**

*Its Program, Structure, Methods and History*

## **I. The Capitalist System of Exploitation**

**U**NDER capitalism, in the United States as well as in other countries, the benefits of the whole industrial system flow into the hands of the capitalist class who own the industries. The capitalists, by this very ownership of the means of producing the necessities of life, and with the aid of their government, compel the great masses of workers to toil for them in return for only a portion, in the shape of wages, of the actual value they produce. The very basis of capitalist society is this systematic robbing the workers of the surplus value they have created.

Capitalist exploitation in the United States has resulted in the development, on the one hand, of a relatively small class of rich capitalists, and, on the other, of a great mass of impoverished workers, with large numbers of petty shopkeepers, farmers, etc., in between. For every billionaire Morgan, Mellon, Ford, or Rockefeller, there are scores of thousands of poverty-stricken workers.

### **WEALTH AND POVERTY**

By reason of the tremendous profits, wrung from the toil and hardships of the workers, the American capitalist class now revels in wealth and luxury absolutely undreamed of in any previous era of the world's history. According to the figures of the U. S. Federal Trade Commission, 1 per cent of the population owns 33 per cent of the national wealth, and 25 per cent own 90 per cent. There are 275 American capitalists with incomes of more than \$1,000,000 per year. In 1928 the General Motors Company made record-breaking dividends of \$276,468,100. In 1929, the Class I railroads produced the fabulous dividends of \$1,284,000,000. The capitalists who wring these vast fortunes from the workers, live lives of luxury and profligacy. Their great task is to find new ways to satisfy their sated and jaded tastes.

Meanwhile the workers, the useful producers in society, live in poverty. According to Prof. Irving Fisher, 93,000,000 of the people have an average income of only \$500 per year. Over 200,000 railroad workers receive only \$17 per week. In the textile industry the average wage is but \$15 to \$18 per week. Wages in the mine industry are at starvation levels. In the south the workers get from 30 to 50 per cent less wages. According to the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, the general average weekly wage of "common labor," figuring on a full-time basis and not allowing for unemployment, is only \$24 per week, or \$1,200 per year. Compare this figure with the annual living budget of \$1,880 for a family of five, worked out by the National Industrial Conference Board (a capitalist institution) in 1926, on the basis of New York conditions. The basic masses of workers are living at standards which deny them the actual necessities of life.

Capitalism subjects women workers to extra exploitation. It forces them to work for an average wage of 30 per cent less than men workers in similar occupations. It forces upon them conditions destructive of their health and vitality. The youth are likewise compelled to work for lower wages and under generally worse conditions than adults. Ruinous child labor is still rampant. But the most bitterly exploited and oppressed section of the working class are the Negroes. They get the lowest wages, worst jobs. They are subjected to segregation, Jim Crowism, political disfranchisement, lynching, and every conceivable form of systematic persecution and social ostracism.

Despite the tremendous increases in industrial productivity, and notwithstanding all capitalist propaganda to the contrary, the standards of living of the working class are on the decline. The workers' percentage of what they produce constantly becomes less. Real wages are falling. Long hours and overwork, sickness and industrial accidents, are all on the increase. On the farms the conditions of the wage workers and poor farmers are equally bad and are becoming worse. They are in the grip of the landlords, bankers and trusts. For the toilers capitalism means poverty and misery; for the parasitic capitalists it means riches and luxury.

## II. Unemployment and the Economic Crisis

Unemployment is one of the terrible evils inherent in the capitalist system. At the present time 7,000,000 workers walk the streets of American cities jobless. Throughout the world there are at least 20,000,000 unemployed. These workers, who with their families total at least 70,000,000, are forced by the bankrupt capitalist system into actual starvation. Capitalism everywhere becomes increasingly unable to find work for the toilers.

Even in the recent period of industrial activity in the United States the number of unemployed was rapidly on the increase from the rationalization or speed-up of industry. In 1927 American factories produced 28 per cent more than they did in 1919, although during the same period the number of workers engaged in these industries had decreased by 980,000. Hundreds of thousands of additional workers were driven from the farms into the army of unemployed in the cities by the agricultural crisis. By the fall of 1929 the army of unemployed, which has become practically permanent, totalled about 4,000,000, and was being added to at the rate of 200,000 per year. Then came the present economic crisis which, with its wholesale shutdown of industry, added at least 3,000,000 more workers to the ranks of the unemployed in the United States.

### THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

The economic crises of capitalism recur periodically. They arise out of the inability of the capitalists to find markets, either in this country or abroad, for the products they steal from the workers. That is, the exploited workers are unable to buy back what they have produced, and the capitalists, who are in competition with those of various other countries, cannot dispose of the masses of commodities on their hands. Consequently, although the masses are deprived of the necessities of life, society suffers from "overproduction," paralysis of industry, stock panics, wholesale unemployment. Capitalist economy collapses, and only after the "overproduction" is wasted or consumed, do the capitalist industries lamely begin another cycle of activity leading in a short period to a still deeper economic crash. These crises tend to become deeper, more widespread and chronic.

The present economic crisis, which has become world-wide in



character, shows again that the much vaunted American capitalism is afflicted with the incurable crisis of capitalism generally.

Unemployment is incurable under capitalism. The speed-up in industry, overproduction in agriculture, the economic crisis, the restriction of the buying power of the masses, the inability of the capitalists to find markets for their commodities, all tend to make unemployment chronic and on an ever-larger scale. The fake Hoover building program, etc., cannot remove these basic causes of unemployment. The only way to cure unemployment is by the overthrow of the capitalist system which gives it birth and the establishment of a Workers and Farmers' Government.

In the Soviet Union the workers have solved the problem of unemployment and capitalist exploitation in general. The best the workers can do under capitalism is, by mass organization and revolutionary action, to partially shield themselves from the worst effects of unemployment.

### THE EMPLOYERS' OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE WORKERS

The capitalists undertake to throw the burden of the economic crisis upon the workers by intensifying their attack against all the standards of the working class. They drive the workers ever faster in the industries. They slash wages, lengthen hours and systematically worsen working conditions. Industrial sickness and accidents are enormously on the increase among the workers because of the terrific strain of rationalization. Workers at the age of 40 in American industries are about ready for the scrap heap and the poorhouse.

Capitalism has only one motive—profit for the employers at the expense and misery of the working class.

The U. S. government is the great instrument of the American capitalist class to maintain this whole system of capitalist exploitation. Its chief function is to hold the masses of workers in subjection. The capitalists own and control the government. The two big parties are the instruments of the employers, and the Socialist Party, as we shall see further on, is their little brother. The democratic pretenses of the government are only a sham to cover up its capitalistic character. When the workers seek to improve their condition through strikes and labor organizations,

when the unemployed demonstrate against their intolerable situation, the government, true to its role as protector of the interests of the capitalist class, militantly combats these movements with an organized terrorism through police, injunctions, troops, etc.

### III. American Imperialism and the War Danger

American capitalism is imperialistic. Finance monopoly capital, in order to find fields of investment and markets for the masses of capital and manufactured commodities robbed from its workers at home, and to secure new sources of raw materials for its industries, carries on an aggressive imperialistic struggle against the other capitalist countries and the colonial peoples.

Capital investment abroad has become a fundamental necessity of American capitalism over-swollen with profits. Before 1914 the United States had only \$2,500,000,000 invested abroad. Now it has \$27,000,000,000, and it is increasing its foreign investments by about \$1,000,000,000 per year.

Likewise, American capitalism must seek world markets for the great surplus of commodities produced by the workers in its industries. The general excess production capacity of American industrial plants is 25 per cent above the demands of the national market, and this percentage is increasing. Exports have grown from \$1,394,000,000 in 1920 to about \$5,000,000,000 in 1928.

To secure the rubber, oil, nitrates, and many other basic elements needed in its industries, American trustified capital follows a policy of getting control of these through its foreign investments, through the direct seizure of countries as colonies (Philippines, Cuba, Porto Rico, etc.), and by domination of the governments of others (Panama, Nicaragua, Haiti, Chile, etc.).

The greed of American imperialism for power and control is limitless. It tries to make a great hinterland of Central and South America. It seeks to get a firm grip financially and politically in Europe with its Dawes Plan, Young Plan, etc. Through its hypocritical open door policy it aims to subjugate China. To carry through this grandiose policy of world domination and exploitation, all the capitalist institutions in the United States are molded and manipulated. Government, press, church, radio, A. F. of L., etc., are pressed into the service of American imperialism.

### THE WAR DANGER

The world struggle of American imperialism brings it into violent conflict with the other imperialist powers—Great Britain, France, Japan, Germany, Italy, etc.—who are pursuing similar imperialistic programs of domination and exploitation. These antagonisms between the imperialist powers over economic questions lead inevitably to war. The tension between the capitalist countries grows greater and greater. Particularly acute is the struggle between Great Britain and the United States for world domination. In Latin America, Canada, India, China, Australia, and in Europe itself, Great Britain militantly resists the United States' efforts to displace it in these markets and as the leading imperialist country. Both countries prepare feverishly for war. The sharpest antagonisms also develop between France and Italy and other countries. All the capitalist powers get ready on a gigantic scale for the world war they know to be imminent. World politics now consist principally of maneuverings of these great powers for economic advantage and for fresh line-ups and alliances in preparation for the impending world struggle.

### THE ATTACK ON THE SOVIET UNION

While the imperialist countries arm rapidly against each other, they especially prepare for the war against the Soviet Union. The antagonism between the capitalist countries and the Soviet Union is the most basic, and the most acute source of war danger. The imperialist countries are determined to crush the Soviet Government at all costs. The Soviet Union is the advance guard and stronghold of the world proletarian revolution, which will finally wipe out the entire capitalist system of exploitation. The capitalists fully realize this and only await a favorable opportunity to launch a military offensive against their mortal enemy.

Since the establishment of the Soviet Government the capitalist countries have never ceased their warfare, in one form or another, against it. In 1918-20 the capitalist powers, including the United States, sent their armies to smash the Soviet Government, but without success. The Russian workers and peasants were victorious in the armed struggle. Then the imperialist powers set up an economic blockade against Soviet Russia, trying to starve out the people by shutting off all exports and imports, but again

without success. The Russian workers and peasants, in spite of unparalleled famine, sickness and hardships, went steadily ahead, building their revolutionary social system and serving as an inspiration to the workers of the world. The imperialist powers have turned the Russian border states—Poland, Rumania, Finland, etc.—into armed camps. With the aid of their A. F. of L. and Socialist Party allies, they are systematically preparing for armed invasion of the Soviet Union. The recent international "prayer day" against the Soviet Union was only one of the many manifestations of the growing capitalist offensive against the Soviet Union. In this attack the United States, world center of capitalism, plays a leading role.

### THE APPROACHING WAR

The war the great capitalist governments are consciously preparing will be far more terrible and devastating than the last world slaughter. Military and naval preparations are going ahead at an unheard-of pace. In 1929 the United States spent \$800,000,000 for its war program—three times the pre-war amount. Great Britain, France, Japan, etc., are also spending fabulous amounts for war. The next war will especially be a war in the air and with chemicals. Aeroplane development has made vast progress since the last war. Also gases have been invented so terribly destructive and diabolical as to make gas masks useless to protect from their deadly fumes. There are bombs to spread germs of anthrax, yellow fever, typhus, plague, cholera, etc. A fleet of aeroplanes, armed with such deadly weapons, could wipe out London in an hour's time, leaving nothing alive. Submarines, tanks, etc., have likewise become increasingly fatal. The whole industrial systems of the respective imperialist powers are being scientifically mobilized for war. Entire populations are subjected to unheard-of military propaganda. Most aggressive in all this organized warfare is the United States, which is now making its great bid for control of the world.

To mask these vast world war preparations the various governments systematically resort to peace maneuvers, such as limitation of armament conferences, Kellogg peace pacts, League of Nations Covenants, international arbitration, etc. The aim of these maneuvers is not to stop the war but to throw dust in the



eyes of the masses and to prevent them from taking action against the developing war. The closer the war, necessarily the more "peace maneuvers." The pacifists, especially the Socialists all over the world, are the most important aids of the capitalists in preparing the war. They deceive the masses as to what is actually taking place and create among them illusions of peace. They are part of the war machine. The hypocrisy of capitalist "peace" maneuvers was again exposed by the refusal of the capitalist governments to accept the recent proposals of the Soviet Government for general disarmament.

#### IV. Fascism, the A. F. of L. and the S. P.

World capitalism, with its deepening general crisis, and confronting an increasingly revolutionary working class, rapidly develops fascist forms and methods. The capitalists undertake to liquidate their growing difficulties not only by speed-up, by cut-throat competition with each other, and by preparations for war, but especially by casting aside all pretense of democracy and proceeding against the working class and its organizations and standards of living with open fascist terrorism. In these fascist developments the capitalists draw into their fascist program the socialists and similar reactionary labor leaders. Over 150,000,000 people are now living in Europe under open fascist dictatorships. The trend toward fascism is manifest in all the capitalist countries.

In the United States fascism develops apace. The big capitalists merge their forces and directly take over functions of the government. This is exemplified, for example, by the current mergers of the banks, railroads, etc., and the entry of such capitalists as Mellon, Young, Dawes, Hoover, Morrow, etc., at the head of the government. The Hoover National Business Council is a super-governmental organ. With these developments go a systematic cultivation of various fascist patriotic organizations such as the American Legion and by an open propaganda against parliamentary government. More than ever the government, national, state and local, together with extra-legal fascist organizations, meet with ruthless violence every effort of the workers to organize and fight to redress their burning grievances.

The American Federation of Labor and the Socialist Party are vital parts of the expanding fascist organization of the capitalists.

#### THE FASCIST A. F. OF L.

The American Federation of Labor is an instrument of the capitalists for the exploitation of the workers. The A. F. of L. leaders have become the unblushing fascist tools of American imperialism. They are capitalist speed-up agents in the industries. The capitalists corrupt these leaders by bribery, by political preferment, by fat jobs in industry, by permitting them to maintain and lead their dues-collecting, salary-paying unions, etc. They have practically degenerated the old trade unions into mere adjuncts of the capitalist producing mechanism. President Green of the American Federation of Labor says: "The union is the workers' business agency for industrial efficiency"; that is, a part of the bosses' organization. The A. F. of L. leaders, abandoning all pretense of struggle against the bosses, aim to substitute the trade unions for company unions. They have discarded the strike as obsolete. Their policy, class collaboration, aims to throw the workers, helpless, to unbridled exploitation. The A. F. of L. officialdom are leaders in every scheme of the bosses to demoralize and disorganize the workers. They are militant advocates of the New Wage Policy, the B. & O. Plan, the Mitten Plan, the Watson Parker law, labor banking, the proposed Federal Anti-Strike Law, the recent company union agreement with Atterbury of the Pennsylvania Railroad, etc. They agreed with Hoover not to demand wage increases during the economic crisis, which was in reality an agreement to accept wage cuts. They called upon the police to club the starving unemployed in the great March 6th demonstrations. They are the champions of the poisonous rationalization propaganda of the Hoovers, Catchings, Carvers, Laucks, etc. The role of the A. F. of L. is to act as strike-breakers against the workers and their new revolutionary unions.

The A. F. of L. leaders are the willing tools of the capitalists in their war preparations and general imperialist program. They call upon the government openly to make war against the Soviet Union. Their Pan-American Federation of Labor, with its theory of the Monroe Doctrine of Labor, is an instrument to further

the interests of American imperialism in Latin America. The A. F. of L. policy toward Europe, China, India, etc., is nothing more or less than the policy of the United States State Department. The A. F. of L. supports every phase of the American war program—jingoism, pacifism and all—just as it is handed out by the bosses. They endorsed Coolidge's fifteen cruiser bill; they are rabid supporters of the Citizens' Military Training Camps, etc. Green, Woll & Co., with their Civic Federation affiliations are the representatives of the finance capitalists in the ranks of the workers. They are imperialists and fascists.

Every policy of the employers for exploiting and demoralizing the workers finds its echo in the program and practices of the A. F. of L. The A. F. of L. leaders discriminate against the Negroes like the employers do, barring them from the unions and Jim-Crowing them in industry. They exclude Chinese, Japanese, Mexicans. They play off one craft against another, and accept as their basic policy the employer-inspired program of peddling off the interests of the great masses of unskilled for the sake of the aristocratic skilled workers. They sacrifice the interests of the unemployed, pushing the unemployed out of the unions and seeking to drive them out of the industries, as the bosses want. Note John L. Lewis' slogan that 300,000 workers must get out of the mining industry. They are open enemies of social insurance for the unemployed. They discriminate systematically against the foreign-born, the youth, and the women workers on the same general lines as the employers.

The A. F. of L. leaders sell out and break strikes; they poison the minds of the workers with capitalist propaganda; they accept without change the tariff, trust, immigration and other policies of the capitalists. They act openly as the tools of the capitalist political parties; they are capitalist parasites preying on the masses of the workers. They look upon the labor movement as a means for them personally to grow rich, at the expense of the workers. A. F. of L. conventions are conventions of business men and political crooks, not of real leaders of labor. This system of misleadership is the most destructive of all the means that the capitalists have been able to devise for keeping the workers in subjection. It is fascist poison in the very fiber of the working class.

### THE SOCIAL-FASCIST S. P., AND MUSTE GROUP

The Socialist Party and the Muste group, which constitute the so-called progressive wing of the A. F. of L., are part of the fascist machinery of the employers. Their policy is the same as that of the A. F. of L. leadership except that they cover up their fascist program with radical phrases. They carry out their treachery to the working class in the name of socialism and progressivism. They are social fascists.

The American socialists, like their European brothers, are full supporters of the capitalist speed-up and war programs. Hillman, Schlesinger, et al. are equally class collaborationists with Woll or Frey, but even more dangerous because they mask this surrender to the employers with radical phrases. The old needle trades unions, which the socialists control, are as much the rationalization agencies of the bosses as are the A. F. of L. organizations. Under the official socialist leadership the conditions of the needle trades workers have been reduced practically to what they were twenty years ago. Wages have been slashed, hours lengthened, the speed-up introduced, the sweat shop re-established. The socialists are likewise insidious and bitter enemies of the Soviet Union. They fall in step with the American imperialist war plans, just as the European socialists do with the war programs of their respective ruling classes. They are demoralizers of the workers and all the more dangerous because of their pretenses at socialism. In Reading the socialist administration arrested workers for collecting money for the Gastonia defense. In Milwaukee they slugged and arrested workers for demonstrating against unemployment and the war danger.

The so-called Muste opposition group in the old trade unions is dominated by the Socialist Party and is a movement whose real purpose is to cover up the treachery of the official bureaucracy. By its pretense at radicalism and opposition it aims at re-establishing the prestige and organizations of the discredited A. F. of L. leaders. The Muste group makes no fight against the A. F. of L. leaders and their reactionary practices, but seeks to slur them over and to inveigle the masses of workers under the control of these reactionary fakers. Its policy is the same basically as that of the official A. F. of L., and its struggle is against the



whole program of revolutionary trade unionism. It is a first aid to the corrupt A. F. of L. bureaucracy.

The A. F. of L. and Socialist-Muste leaders seek to extend their nefarious influence over the unorganized workers as well as the organized. Where masses of unorganized workers, or those organized in the new revolutionary unions, strike against the intolerable conditions under which they work, the A. F. of L. is always on hand to act as a strike-breaking organization. In this respect it makes special use of the Muste elements, as in the recent textile strikes in Elizabethton, Marion and New Bedford. The Socialists and Musteites are inextricably bound up with the most reactionary elements in the A. F. of L. In the recent New York cloak and dress strikes there was a complete united front of employers, police, capitalist newspapers, A. F. of L. leaders, socialists, Musteites, underworld gangsters, etc., against the revolutionary Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union. In the Illinois coal district, the Musteites, headed by Howat, are in close alliance with the Peabody Coal Co. and its confessed agent, Frank Farrington. The employers, the government, the A. F. of L. leaders, the socialists and the Musteites comprise one general front against the workers in every important labor struggle, both within and without the old unions. And more and more this combination tends to use fascist violence and strike-breaking tactics against the working class.

### V. Building Socialism in the Soviet Union

The foregoing picture of international capitalism, which is one of paralyzed industry, mass unemployment, inhuman speed-up, wage cuts, poverty, misery, fascism, and wholesale preparation for war, is a picture of a bankrupt social system. Capitalism is doomed. It is in deepening world crisis. It is rapidly decaying from its own rottenness. Before long the awakening world's working class will give it a death blow and begin to build the society of the future.

#### SOCIALISM

The Russian workers have blazed the way for the workers of the world. They have overthrown Czarism and capitalism and are now making tremendous progress in building socialism.

Under the leadership of the Russian Communist Party they have set up their own Soviet Government. They have abolished private ownership of industry and the exploitation of the workers. They have nationalized the land. They have set up a scientifically planned national economy and, despite the greatest obstacles, have registered success after success in socialist construction. They are building a great new social machine, of which all the parts—government, unions, co-operatives, etc.—are homogeneous parts and all are working for the benefit of the workers.

The Five Year Plan of Socialist Construction is unexampled in the history of the world. This plan calls for an investment of \$33,000,000,000 in industrial expansion and general social development. Scores of steel mills, chemical works, power plants, etc., are being built. In 1920 production was only 20 per cent of pre-war; now it is 200 per cent, and at the conclusion of the Five Year Plan it will be 275 per cent. The production in agriculture will be twice that of pre-war. Four million workers will be added to industry. The output of coal will be increased to 230 per cent of pre-war. The yearly increase of mechanical power per worker in the next five years will be 35 per cent, while in the United States it averages only 10 per cent. The chemical industry will be increased three and a half times. The biggest automobile and tractor plants in Europe are being built. The industrial system generally will be electrified by the completion of the tremendous electric power plants now being constructed. The Soviet Union will be the third nation in producing pig iron and the fourth in coal. Real wages of the workers will be increased 71 per cent. The rate of industrial growth under the Five Year Plan will be 27 per cent per year, whereas the most favorable rate ever achieved by any capitalist country, the United States, was only 8 per cent. The realization of the great Five Year Plan will enable the Soviet Union to soon reach and outstrip the technically and economically most advanced countries. Great state and collective farms are taking the place of the primitive, individualistic agricultural system. Billions of dollars are being spent on education and general culture. The Soviet Union is now experiencing the greatest industrial and social advance ever made by any nation.



Such tremendous progress is being made in the achievement of the Five Year Plan that it will surely be completed in four years. In agriculture the five-year quota of development has already been exceeded. The workers and peasants are infused with a blazing revolutionary enthusiasm for the building of socialism. Even the capitalist press of the world is astounded at the marvelous industrial and social progress in the Soviet Union. All the lies of the capitalist enemies, and in this lying the A. F. of L. and social-fascists have taken the lead; cannot obscure the great victories of the Russian workers. It is in this tremendous progress of socialism that is to be found the basic reason for the present bitter hostility and war preparations of the capitalist world against the Soviet Union. American workers will do well to learn what is taking place in the Soviet Union and to follow the example of the revolutionary Russian workers.

## VI. The Trade Union Unity League

The A. F. of L. cannot organize and lead the masses of workers. Only 3,000,000 out of at least 20,000,000 organizable workers have been brought into the old unions. The bulk of these are skilled workers in the lighter and less trustified industries, such as printing, building, amusement trades, etc. The great masses of workers in the basic industries—steel, railroads, chemicals, automobiles, mining, electrical manufacturing, marine transportation, agriculture, etc.—remain almost entirely unorganized. The A. F. of L. makes no fight to organize or defend the interests of the working class. It bases itself upon the skilled aristocracy of labor and systematically sells out, not only the highly exploited semi-skilled and unskilled workers but also the skilled workers themselves.

### THE RADICALIZATION OF THE WORKERS

The present situation exposes more completely than ever the bankruptcy of the American Federation of Labor. Under the pressure of capitalist rationalization, unemployment and low wages, great masses of workers in the basic and trustified industries are beginning to seethe with discontent. The rationalization of industry and economic crisis mean inevitably the radicalization of the workers. Evidences of the growing radicalization

and developing struggle of the workers are to be seen on all sides, by strikes and movements in the coal mining, automobile, needle, shoe and other industries. This radicalization is especially manifested by the great upheaval in the south and by the gigantic demonstrations of the unemployed on March 6th. The American working class, which capitalist apologists thought would sleep on forever, is beginning to awaken and to go over to a counter-offensive against the capitalist exploiters.

The growing radicalization of American workers is a part of the world-wide radicalization of the working class under the pressure of intensified capitalist exploitation and sharpening world crisis. It is marked by great strikes in Germany, France, England, Poland, Bulgaria, etc., and by big uprisings in the colonial countries, India, China, etc. The world's workers are beginning to develop a fresh revolutionary offensive against the capitalist system.

### THE NEW TRADE UNION CENTER

The fascist A. F. of L. is the enemy of the working class. A new and revolutionary system of labor unionism is necessary. This new unionism, born of the stern needs of the workers, is now beginning to take shape in the Trade Union Unity League. This is the most important development in modern American labor history.

The Trade Union Unity League was organized in Cleveland, August 31st, 1929. It is a reorganization and expansion of the old Trade Union Educational League, which was organized in November, 1920. The old T. U. E. L. placed the main stress of its work upon the organization of revolutionary minorities within the conservative trade unions. It led a thousand fights against the A. F. of L. misleaders, mobilizing the rank and file workers to struggle against their disruptive class collaboration policy and for a program of class struggle. The new Trade Union Unity League has as its main task the organizing of the unorganized workers into industrial unions, independent of the A. F. of L. At the same time it organizes the revolutionary workers within the reformist unions. It unites politically and organizationally the unemployed with the employed.

Nationally, the T. U. U. L. is constructed by the affiliation of National Industrial Unions, National Industrial Leagues, the National Unemployed Council, and local organizations that have no other national affiliations. The principal National Industrial Unions are the National Miners' Union, the National Textile Workers' Union, and the Needle Trades Workers' Industrial Union. These were all born in the heat of the bitterest struggle against the A. F. of L. leaders and the employers. The principal National Industrial leagues are those in the steel, automobile, marine transport, railroad, shoe, food, building, lumber and agricultural industries. These leagues, made up of local groupings in the respective industries, are in process of development into National Industrial Unions. The National Unemployed Council, a dues-paying organization based on individual membership, organizes local unemployed councils, and is affiliated to the T. U. U. L., nationally and locally. The T. U. U. L. also organizes Local Trade Union Unity Councils in the various localities, made up by the affiliation of local unions, shop committees, left wing minorities in the conservative unions, etc. State Councils are similarly built. The National Committee of the T. U. U. L., elected in its biennial convention, consists of 53 members. It elects a National Executive Board of 15 members. The T. U. U. L. and its affiliated organizations have various departments—Negro, Organization, Financial, Youth, Women, Education, International—and for the various trade sections. The national organ of the T. U. U. L. is "Labor Unity."

#### BASED ON THE UNSKILLED

The TUUL fights for the interests of the workers as a whole and is based primarily upon the unskilled and the semi-skilled masses, the most exploited and militant sections of the working class. The A. F. of L. program of basing the labor movement upon the skilled workers, a policy that was always wrong, is made increasingly disastrous by the wholesale elimination of skill in the industries through standardization, mechanization, and speed-up. The A. F. of L. is founded on the diminishing labor aristocracy. The revolutionary unionism bases itself upon the broad masses of unskilled and semi-skilled, who are the decisive factors in modern industry.

#### INDUSTRIAL FORM

The class struggle unions are industrial in structure. They organize all sections of the working class—Negroes, women, youth, skilled, unskilled, native, foreign. The great consolidation of the forces of capitalism makes industrial unionism imperative for a fighting labor movement. Craft unionism, born in the early stages of capitalism, is worthless in these days of monopoly capitalist organization. In trustified industries, where 90 per cent of the workers can learn their "trades" in a week, organization by craft is criminal betrayal of the workers. Even in those industries which are more competitive in character, such as textile, needle, mining, etc., the great banks exert the controlling force, and make necessary an all-inclusive, militant, industrial unionism. Only by great mass movements, drawing in all the workers, and capable of paralyzing whole industries and groups of industries, can the workers make headway against the powerful employers, who are aided by the state and their fascist labor leader allies. The A. F. of L. craft system of one or more "trades" striking while the rest remain at work is a crime against the working class. It must be utterly wiped out.

#### SHOP ORGANIZATION

The TUUL unions discard the old local structure of craft unionism. They base themselves directly upon the shops, establishing shop committees and the shop delegate system. The building of shop committees, the carrying on of union work directly in the shop, draws the working masses into the life and struggle of the union. The new unions eliminate the autocracy of the craft unions and establish a real democracy among the workers. They wipe out the corrupting high salary practices of the old trade unions and pay their officials only the going wage of the industries. Instead of exorbitant dues and initiation fees, breeders of corruption and reaction, they have union rates within the reach of the lowest paid workers. They systematically carry on a work of education of their general membership as to the real meaning of capitalism and the struggle to abolish it.

#### STRIKE STRATEGY

The TUUL unions develop a revolutionary strike strategy. They seek, not as the A. F. of L., ways to surrender to the bosses,



but to fight them. They study systematically the strength and maneuvers of the capitalist enemy and calculate the methods which will draw the masses of workers into the struggle, develop their fighting initiative and turn their maximum power against the capitalists at the most opportune moment and in the most strategic place. A correct strike strategy involves a careful evaluation of all the experiences gained by the workers in the class struggle. Especially it requires an attitude of self-criticism regarding mistakes made during the work of the unions. Frank self-criticism is one of the foundation-stones of the revolutionary union movement.

The strike strategy of the TUUL aims to develop the scattered struggles of the workers into the mass political strike. All struggles in the present era tend to take on a political character because the capitalists use the state power more and more aggressively against the workers. It is necessary therefore that the workers bring their fight to a higher political plane, by injecting into it broad political slogans, by widening it to include the masses of workers, by deepening it and giving it more of a class content, by directing its attack against the state as well as against the individual capitalists.

A successful strike strategy requires the adoption of the principles of independent leadership laid down by the Red International of Labor Unions. That is, the setting up of broad rank and file strike committees and action committees, to draw the unorganized as well as the organized workers into the struggle. The organization of Workers Defense Corps against fascist attacks, as at Gastonia, where the workers defended themselves with guns in their hands, is an indispensable part of revolutionary strike strategy. The new unionism in the United States, with its industrial form, militant tactics, etc., is the American expression of the new and higher form of organization and struggle now being developed by the workers all over the world in the present rising wave of struggle.

#### INTERNATIONAL AFFILIATION

The class struggle unionism is international in character. It recognizes the common class interests of the workers of all countries and the necessity for a united struggle against international

capitalism. The TUUL repudiates completely the nationalistic and patriotic stand of the reformist trade unions. It joins hands with the militant labor movement of the world under the banner of the Red International of Labor Unions. The RILU is the only revolutionary world union of workers. It makes war on world imperialism and its social-fascist allies of the Amsterdam International. In every country its unions are to found in the very forefront of the class struggle. The TUUL is the American Section of the RILU.

#### WORK IN THE OLD UNIONS

Besides organizing the unorganized into revolutionary industrial unions, the Trade Union Unity League carries on the struggle within the reactionary trade unions. It organizes the best elements there into leagues to fight for a minimum wage and strike policy in these organizations, to break the alliance of the fascist leaders with the capitalist political parties, to rouse the organized masses for the defense of the Soviet Union and against the impending war, to expose and eliminate the reactionary leaders and to defeat their program of class collaboration, to wipe out the discrimination against Negro workers in the industries and in the unions, to draw the old organizations into closer relations organizationally and ideologically, with the industrial union movement. The new union movement fights militantly for class industrial unionism, both outside and inside the old unions. It follows a policy of making broad united front movements from the bottom with the workers against the slippery Musteite and A. F. of L. leaders. It sets up rank and file strike committees to take the leadership of the struggle away from the reactionaries. The TUUL will never surrender the masses in the old trade unions to Green, Woll, Hillquit, Muste & Co., the labor agents of American imperialism.

#### VII. The Program of the T. U. U. L.

The Trade Union Unity League bases itself upon the principles of the class struggle. Its slogan is "class against class." It realizes that the interests of the workers are flatly in opposition to those of the capitalists, and that an irreconcilable conflict goes on between the working class and the capitalist class. It rejects collaboration with the employers, the A. F. of L. policy which para-

lyzes the efforts of the workers to organize and defend themselves. It condemns arbitration, whether voluntary or compulsory, as a method of the employers to defeat the demands of the workers. It rejects social-fascist proposals for the launching of a Labor Party, which would be only another capitalist party. Its foundation working principle is that the workers can secure from the employers only that which they have the power to take in active struggle. The TUUL organizes the workers and aggressively wages the class war, so that their maximum power may be brought into the struggle against the capitalist class. It supports the revolutionary political struggles and the political organization of the working class, the Communist Party.

The TUUL has a revolutionary goal. It points out to the workers the disaster of the capitalists owning the industries and operating them for their own profits. It advocates the overthrow of the present system of capitalist ownership and exploitation and the establishment of a Soviet system in which production will be carried on, not for private profit, but for the social good. Only by such revolutionary action can the American workers, like the workers in other countries, finally free themselves from unemployment, low wages, long hours, the speed-up, gradually worsening conditions, and terrible war.

#### AGAINST FASCISM AND SOCIAL-FASCISM

In the very center of the program of the Trade Union Unity League stands a relentless struggle against the fascist and social-fascist labor agents of the capitalists, that is, the A. F. of L. and socialist leaders, the Musteites, etc., and their whole program of class collaboration, arbitration, speed-up, anti-strike policies, etc. The most aggressive fight against these elements, mainstays of the capitalist system, is the fundamental condition necessary for the building of the militant labor movement and the carrying on of a successful struggle against capitalism.

#### AGAINST CAPITALIST RATIONALIZATION

The Trade Union Unity League wages a relentless war against the destructive capitalist rationalization which inflicts upon the working class vastly increased burdens and hardships of overwork, unemployment, low wages, long hours, sickness, accidents, child labor, super-exploitation of women, driving of older workers out

of industry, union disorganization and degeneration, poisonous capitalist propaganda, and the menacing danger of war. The fight against capitalist rationalization is the struggle against the capitalist system. It involves the whole program of the Trade Union Unity League.

The Red International of Labor Unions, at its Fourth Congress in 1928, worked out the general basis of struggle against capitalist rationalization. Its main proposals follow:

“1. The maximum 7-hour day without a reduction in wages, and the 6-hour day for underground workers and for those engaged in dangerous and particularly strenuous occupations, as well as for workers under 18 years of age.

2. The rejection of overtime work; early closing before Sundays and holidays; an annual holiday of a fortnight and not less than a month for underground workers and for those engaged in dangerous trades and particularly strenuous occupations, with the payment of full wages.

3. The fight against wage reduction; the fight for raising real wages; the fight against bonus and piece-rate systems; an increased struggle against piece-rates on the conveyor. Where piece-rates are in force it is necessary to ask for guaranteed minimum wages; the restriction of the rates of output in the terms of the wage agreements; a struggle against the arbitrary regulation of the pace of conveyors; equal wages for equal work for men, women and youth.

4. The limitation of the speed of work by the introduction of rest pauses; the right to change the place of work; the struggle against the stop-watch system.

5. A worker may be discharged only by consent of the factory council, or the union local, with the payment of the discharge benefits, which should be particularly high in the case of mass dismissals; the shortening of the working hours in order to prevent dismissals, while paying the same wages as before. The struggle for enrolling



the unemployed into the process of production; the payment of state benefits to the unemployed at the rate of the minimum wage without distinction of nationality and sex; the remuneration for so-called "relief" work at the current rate of wages.

6. The introduction of legislative orders for the protection of the workers in the factories, as well as all kinds of social welfare measures.

7. The prohibition of the employment of pregnant women and nursing mothers in hard and unhealthy work.

8. The struggle against factory police, pecuniary fines, espionage, blacklist, etc."

The program of the RILU can be further concretized in the U. S. by the demand for the 5-day week; full rights to Negro workers, full-crew regulations on the railroad and in various industries. The TUUL develops specific programs to combat capitalist rationalization in each respective industry.

#### AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT

The TUUL makes an energetic struggle against unemployment. It demands "Work or Wages"; it demands government social insurance against unemployment by payment of full wages for the totally unemployed and those who are working only part time. The TUUL demands the 7-hour day, the 5-day week, the abolition of child labor, etc., as further measures against unemployment. It militantly exposes such fake unemployment programs as that of Hoover, which, while pretending to relieve unemployment by regulating building construction, is in reality only an insidious form of the general union-wrecking and speed-up program of the capitalist class.

To enforce its demands against unemployment the TUUL organizes the unemployed workers into the National Unemployed Council. It connects up the organizations and struggles of the unemployed with those of the employed. It organizes the unemployed to support the demands of the employed workers and it rallies the employed workers behind all the demands of the unemployed. The TUUL fights for the establishment of a broad

system of social legislation in the U. S. It demands legislation to provide for the shortening of the work period, sanitation and safety in industry, the elimination of child labor, unhealthy work for women, etc. It demands state insurance against unemployment, sickness, accidents, old age, etc., this whole body of social insurance to be paid for entirely by the employers and to be built upon the principle of complete self-management by the insured workers, without any participation by the capitalists or by the state in the management of the insurance fund.

#### FOR THE RIGHTS OF NEGROES

The TUUL conducts an aggressive struggle in defense of the Negro workers. These are the most oppressed, exploited and persecuted section of the entire working class. The advancement of the workers generally is inseparably bound up with the advancement of the Negroes. Every blow struck at the Negroes by the bosses is a blow at the whole working class. The TUUL has as one of its most fundamental program demands the fight for full racial, political and social equality and the right of national self-determination for Negroes. It makes relentless war against lynching, Jim-Crowism, and discrimination of all kinds against Negroes. It roots out the race prejudice of chauvinism of white workers against Negroes. The TUUL demands the fullest participation and leadership of Negro workers in all the organizations and movements of the working class. It exposes the systematic betrayal of the Negroes by the fascist and social-fascist labor leaders.

The TUUL organizes Negroes into the new industrial unions with the white workers on the basis of the fullest equality. In the old unions, it combats all discriminatory practices aimed against Negroes. It demands the admission of Negroes into these unions and, where this admittance cannot be accomplished, and where there are no revolutionary unions, it organizes separate unions for Negroes. The TUUL Negro Department connects up the fight of the Negro workers in this country with the worldwide struggle of the Negro race through the International Negro Labor Bureau of the RILU. The TUUL endorses and supports the general work of the American Negro Labor Congress.

### FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF THE YOUTH

The young workers are playing an increasingly important role in industry and in the struggles of the working class. They are the strategic factor in capitalist war preparations and are being systematically militarized upon a gigantic scale. The A. F. of L. leaders, conforming as usual to the general line of policy of the employers, have grossly discriminated against the youth, barring them from the unions and refusing to fight against the special abuses to which they are subjected. They have allowed unhampered the employers to militarize the youth through the C. M. T. C.'s etc., to poison it through company sports, and to generally cripple it ideologically.

The TUUL rejects this whole line of the social reformists and puts in the forefront of its program the organization of the youth and the advancement of its interests. The TUUL has a National Youth Department and establishes youth sections nationally and locally in its affiliated unions. It raises special youth demands, for the 6-hour working day and 5-day week, equal pay for equal work, abolition of night work, abolition of child labor, establishment of vacations, minimum wages, apprenticeship regulations, rest periods, etc. It furthers anti-military work amongst the youth and supports the proletarian sport organization, the Labor Sports Union.

### FOR THE STRUGGLE OF THE WOMEN WORKERS

With the simplification and mechanization of the industrial process, women are being brought into the industries in huge and increasing numbers. They are subjected to the fiercest speed-up and compelled to work for wages 25 per cent to 40 per cent lower than male workers at similar occupations. They are an important factor in the military mobilization plans of American imperialism. The trade union leaders have altogether failed to defend the interests of the women workers, barring them from the unions and discriminating against them in industry as they have done against the youth, the Negroes and the foreign-born.

The TUUL works to unite the women workers for a joint struggle with the workers generally. It maps out programs of demands for them, embodying equal pay for equal work, general raising of women workers' wages, establishment of a 7-hour day

and 5-day week, with a 6-hour day for harmful and strenuous occupations and a full month holiday annually with full pay; for the elimination of night work and overtime and work in harmful occupations; protection during child-birth periods; installment of proper sanitary regulations; protection by social insurance against unemployment, old age, sickness, etc. To further these programs the TUUL has a National Women's Department, establishes women's commissions in the unions, and develops periodic trade union conferences for women workers. The winning of the women workers for the class struggle is a major objective of the TUUL.

### FOR STRIKE RELIEF AND LABOR DEFENSE

Strikes in modern trustified industries are to be won primarily by the paralyzing effects of vast masses of workers exerted militantly at strategic points, and not by the systematic payment of high strike benefits customary in the reformist unions of skilled workers. Nevertheless, in every mass strike there are huge and imperative financial needs of the workers which must be satisfied at all costs. For this purpose the affiliated unions of the TUUL set aside portions of their funds for strike benefits and also initiate general collection campaigns among the workers at large in times of important strikes. The TUUL also collaborates with the Workers International Relief in these campaigns.

An aggressive and systematic defense of class-war prisoners is also a fundamental necessity for the workers in the class struggle. For this an established defense organization is required. The capitalists, as a settled policy, attempt to demoralize the workers by imprisoning and executing their best fighting militants. This is exemplified by the whole host of Sacco-Vanzetti, Mooney-Billings, Ford-Suhr, Haymarket, Everett, Centralia, etc., labor cases. The TUUL endorses and collaborates with the International Labor Defense, which educates and organizes the working class to defend its fighters who are persecuted by the capitalist class.

### FOR THE SUPPORT OF COLONIAL REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

The TUUL, joining hands with the workers of the world under the leadership of the RILU, supports aggressively all the struggles of the toiling masses in the colonial countries, China, India, Africa,



etc. It makes common cause with the workers of Latin America and the Philippines against American imperialism. It especially sets up close working relations with the Canadian and Mexican revolutionary trade union movements in their struggle against their exploiters. It condemns the Pan-American Federation of Labor as a tool of American imperialism for the subjugation of Latin America. It endorses the Latin-American Confederation of Labor and affiliates with the All-America Anti-Imperialist League in the common fight against American imperialism. The TUUL is also affiliated with the Pan-Pacific Secretariat which unites the workers of the eastern countries in defense of the Russian, Chinese and Indian revolutions and against world imperialists generally.

#### AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR AND FOR DEFENSE OF THE SOVIET UNION

The Trade Union Unity League fights militantly against the impending capitalist war and for the defense of the Soviet Union. Its slogan is: "Not a man, not a cent, not a gun for Imperialist War." It seeks to mobilize the great masses of workers against war by organizing strikes, demonstrations, etc., in conjunction with all militant organizations fighting against war. In the event of an Imperialist War it will mobilize the workers to struggle against American imperialism and to transform this war into a class war against the capitalist system itself. The TUUL devotes special attention to organizing the workers in the war industries.

The Trade Union Unity League especially organizes and educates the masses to fight in defense of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is the stronghold of the world's working class. Its cause is the cause of the workers in all countries. The overthrow of the Soviet Union by the capitalists would mean not only the slaughter of tens of thousands of Russian workers, but would mark the beginning of the worst period of reaction internationally that the world has ever known. It would lead to widespread fascist terrorism, and wholesale destruction of workers' economic, political and cultural organizations, and the wiping out of conditions won by the workers through a century of sacrifice and struggle. It would throw back for decades the development of the

world's labor movement. The workers must fight to the end in defense of the Soviet Union.

Fundamentally necessary in the struggle against Imperialist War, for defense of the Soviet Union is an exposure of and fight against the war-role played by the social-reformists. Their special task is to blind the workers to the impending struggle, to militarize them, and to lead them into the coming slaughter. The social-reformists are the leaders and organizers of the attack against the Soviet Union. Their pacifism is merely that of the capitalist diplomats and propagandists and it has as its main purpose to lull the masses into a false sense of security regarding the war danger.

## **MEMBERSHIP to the T.U.U.L.**

"The T.U.U.L. shall include as members, all wage workers and their labor organizations in industry and agriculture, regardless of race, creed, color, sex, age or craft who accept its program of class struggle. . ."

Article II. T.U.U.L. Constitution.

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*Organize the Unorganized.*

*Demand the 7-hour Day, 5-day Week.*

*Fight Against Unemployment.*

*Demand Work or Wages—Social Insurance.*

*Fight Against Wage Cuts and for Wage Increases.*

*For Full Economic, Political and Social Equality, and Self-determination for Negroes.*

*Organize the Youth and the Women.*

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